



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
January 22, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madame Speaker:

I write today to request and enlist your support for the creation of a bipartisan select committee – chaired by a Member of the Majority and seated with an equal number of Democrats and Republicans – to oversee the implementation and progress of the President's new strategy for success in Iraq. I am sure you will agree that such a panel is necessary, both to provide proper Congressional oversight and to ensure that the American people are duly informed of the progress being made in this mission.

I support the spirit of the letter you and Senate Majority Leader Reid sent to the President last Friday, indicating your willingness to work together and to consult fully on issues important to our country, and specifically terrorism, in a bipartisan manner. However, while I agree with your assessment that the Congress has an important role to play, I am concerned the existing committee system in the House is too disparate to focus exclusively on Iraq. A select panel, by contrast, will afford the House of Representatives an opportunity to bring together Members with expertise to provide oversight and thoughtful analysis of the progress being made under the new strategy.

The difficulties ahead are clear and unmistakable. Previous strategies to quell sectarian violence and stabilize democracy in Iraq have not succeeded. Our operations in Iraq must operate within the negotiated agreements between our government and the Government of Iraq. Yet despite these difficulties, one point supersedes these issues: it is in our immediate and long-term strategic interests to ensure regional stability and to deny terrorists a sanctuary in Iraq. An arbitrary withdrawal of our troops at this time would constitute a direct threat to the safety of the American people. The President has determined our troops in harm's way are in need of reinforcements, and their deployment has already started.

Their mission is complex and urgent. The stakes for our country and our military are high. Therefore, House Republicans have identified a set of strategic benchmarks designed to measure the progress of the President's new strategy in Iraq, and to hold the Iraqi government accountable for its role in achieving success.

Accordingly, the President would be required to certify progress and transmit a report to this bipartisan select committee every 30 days on the implementation of these benchmarks to measure the effectiveness of the President's new strategy. These benchmarks are aggressive and tailored to measure the progress of every mission component.

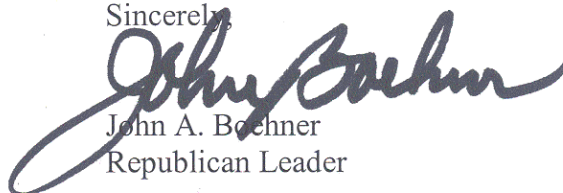
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As you know, Congress cannot and must not dictate the strategies or methods used in war, but we have a duty to the American people to candidly and honestly assess whether our efforts have been successful.

Attached for your review is a listing of our benchmarks for success. I hope I can count on your support for these, as well as your assistance in establishing a bipartisan select committee to oversee their achievement.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John A. Boehner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "J".

John A. Boehner
Republican Leader